

You've been a musician just about all your life, and I know you played some major venues before you were 12 or maybe even 11, when did you start playing?

In the liner notes, you say you wrote these songs over a 10 year period, was there a conscious effort to take your music in a different direction, or once you realized you had enough material for an album, did you then realize it was going to be different?

When you were writing these songs, did you hear the arrangements and instrumentation in your head or did that come later?

This seems to me to be the most personal album you've made, and in that it's a bit different than your previous solo album, was that a conscious decision?

What I mean is the songs seem to be in a sense autobiographical or if not that, coming out of things or incidents that happened in your life?

In a certain way with one or two exceptions, you're not straying all that far from country music, though this isn't what is coming out of Nashville these days?

At the same time, I can envision some of these songs getting covered, maybe not by the current crop of Nashville bands, but maybe some of the people who came before them.

When did you write JJ Cale?

The song is a tribute both musically, lyrically, and especially in you guitar solos which may surprise some of your fans.

In a sense it's the closest you come to rock, though I'm not sure if rock accurately describes what he did. Certainly a lot of rock artists covered his stuff, but what he did was unique.

What is the name of the guitar style on Heartache and Pain and who are those guys?

You co-produced this album with your son Sam and Lloyd Maines, and Sam also did the engineering, what was the collaboration like? Checking the credits, it seems they both contributed quite a bit on every level.

You touch on a lot of different styles, but don't necessarily delve in deep. I mean "I Ain't Lookin' For Trouble" is bluegrass sounding, but it isn't totally bluegrass. There's no banjo, the melody isn't a bluegrass melody, but in the feel and sound are close to bluegrass.

Then right in the middle of the album is kind of a jazz tune, or would you say it's a pop tune?

Is there any one songwriter you would say is your greatest influence or inspiration?

When I thought about the album, after several listens, the name that came to me was Willie Nelson.

I felt in listening to the songs, a lot of years of craftsmanship went into writing them. By that I mean it seemed you were pretty careful about how you wanted to say things, what words you wanted to use, and what you wanted to leave out?

I noticed also you were very aware of the lines fitting the meter of the music, which not everyone does these days.

Care to comment on the innumerable changes in the business you've seen over 40 years? This album's on your own label, and I know last year you said to me, no more record companies.

Tell me about the Waylon song. I thought Willie's vocal was chilling, and I don't mean that in relaxed chilling, I mean intense chilling.

You've worked with and met innumerable greats, and several of your musical heroes of all genres. You list quite a few in the notes from Stevie Ray Vaughan to the Five Blind Boys to Dylan, John Sebastian, Jim Kweskin, and several country legends. But I also know you've played with Richard Manuel and knew Van Morrison.

In the past year we lost George Jones and Ray Price, and before that Earl Scruggs, Buck Owens, Johnny Cash and several others. There's only a few left now very few of the original country greats, do you think someone will pick up the music and carry it on?

You've been on the road now for 43 years, and you still crisscross the entire country several times a year. Is it safe to say you're on the bus more than in your own house?

And finally since this is a magazine about songwriters and songwriting, any advice for songwriters out there?

